

# Ardsley edged out in thriller

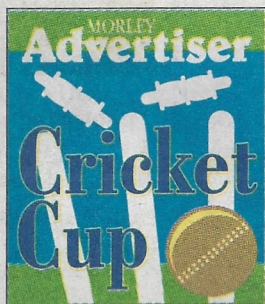
GILDERSOME retained the Morley Advertiser Cup with a thrilling last ball victory over East Ardsley at Drighlington on Sunday.

Veteran Ray Smith was the Gildersome hero having stepped as an eleventh hour replacement to ensure they had a full side.

And after 79.5 overs of entertaining cricket played in a sporting atmosphere on an excellent batting track, Smith found himself facing Simon Sterling with the scores level.

Smith hit the ball into the covers where it was brilliantly fielded by Matthew Redgwick who threw it back to the bowler.

But somehow Sterling missed the stumps allowing Smith and his side to



**by Richard Byram**

scramble home by the narrowest possible margin.

It provided a fitting climax to a superb game which had begun slowly with Gildersome pacemen Mohammed Dravid and Steve Dixon pinning down Ardsley openers Andy Langley and Geoff Hunt.

But a change in bowlers saw Langley get into his stride, despatching the ball to all parts of the ground.

At the other end, Hunt played a useful supporting role and the pair put on 96 for the first wicket, before Hunt was caught by Dravid off Adam Balmforth for 33.

Langley was joined by Sterling who had climbed out of his sick bed to play and he was soon among the runs smashing three huge sixes in a quick-fire 25. But just as he seemed to be on top of the bowling, Chris Smith tricked

him with a slower ball and Sterling spooned it back to the grateful bowler.

Langley was eventually caught on the boundary after scoring a brilliant 88, including 13x4 and it was left to Julian Smith (34) and skipper Mark Heald (21) to drive the score through 200 and the innings eventually closed on 221-5.

Dravid with 2-48, Chris Smith 1-38, Adam Balmforth 1-41 and a run out accounted for the East Ardsley dismissals.

The Gildersome reply set off at a rapid rate with injured opener Chris Smith cracking a quickfire 39 which featured 6x4 and 2x6. At the other end Carl Busfield (8) and Adam Balmforth (14) did not last long before Steve Dixon's arrival.

The big Aussie's innings of 77, featuring 4x4 and 4x6 was the backbone of the Gildersome reply and earned him man of the match.

But while Dixon batted on he was losing partners at the other end. Beal (21) and Cawthrey (24) helped him out, but when Dixon was eventually bowled middle stump by Mick Pearson, it looked like a certain Ardsley win.

Going into the last over Gildersome still needed nine off Sterling's last over with two wickets remaining. The first two balls went for singles and the third Ray Smith despatched to the boundary for four.

A single off the fourth and fifth tied the scores and the stage was set for Smith's last ball heroics.

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# Final action through the lens

1



Pictures  
by Keith  
Lawson

2



1 Captains Carl Busfield (Gildersome, left) and Andy Lan (M4486k34)

2 East Ardsley's Langley takes strike against man-of-the-match

3 Gildersome batsman Adan Balmforth has his stumps shattered

4 Colleague Ricky Daniels suffers the same fate against the s

5 Man-of-the-match Dixon set to launch another big hit in Gil

3

4

5

